

The Defenders of New Hope

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Summary: Set between Halo 1 & 2. Attempted humour. Cortana and Miranda Keyes' AI have cooked up a little moral boost.

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Hey my first fic, be nice or I'll come over to your house, cut off your legs, let off a petrol bomb, and sit on your lawn and laugh my ass off as I watch you drag your bloody stumps out of your burning house, and then we'll see if you like flames.

The Master Chief was bored; he lay prone atop a hill with some light foliage proving him with just enough cover to avoid detection, looking through the scope on his battle rifle scanning the Covenant troops massing in the grassy plains beyond. He was bored because, at present, he was not there to kill any of them. He was there to provide backup to Linda, and the Master Chief was now always with Linda on any mission, they were almost attached at the hip, because Linda, who after nearly dying twice, the second time occurring while he, Linda and Will were attempting to capture nav data from a Covenant frigate that was running point for a small fleet passing through the system.

However after the Master Chief's Spectacular achievements against the odds on Halo, the UNSC decided that they could not lose any more SPARTANS until the SPARTAN III program was up and running, and it was estimated that, with resources being stretched as far as they currently were, this would not happen for at least a year or two. So orders were given that on any mission that did not directly involve defending Earth from Covenant invasion, no SPARTAN was to be lost, and that any SPARTAN that was injured during a mission (within

reason) was to be removed from the battle area as soon as possible to receive medical treatment.

They were there to take out the Gold Elite that was in charge of the Covenant's ground forces on this planet. Linda was by far the best choice for this mission so she and the Chief were ordered to their current location to set up camp so to speak, and wait for their target. With him out of the way, they were to call in artillery strikes and bombing raids, which the UNSC hoped, would thin them out enough to allow the battalions of Marines now surrounding them to mop up whatever was left.

"_John, why are you so tense? With the armaments the UNSC allowed you to take on this simple albeit boring mission _(consisting of a launcher with 9 rockets, several dozen plasma grenades, his modified battle rifle with roughly 3,000 rounds, his pistol and various other odds and ends) _you should be pretty relaxed, in fact this more than ample weapons cache coupled with your enhanced shielding, you could effectively be labelled as 'war in a can'"._

"That's just it Cortana, why would the UNSC allow me to bring this much with me? I just get the feeling that there's something they're not telling me- "

Before the Chief could finish his sentence a light flashed on his H.U.D indicating Linda wanted to speak with him. "What is it?"

"I've spotted the target but he's near the centre of the crowd, there are too many other elites surrounding him to get a clear shot."

The answer came to Cortana almost instantly, and she opened a channel that they could both hear. "_John switch to heat vision, Linda, use the _infa-red laser on your rifle to pinpoint his area for me and I'll be able to call in the artillery to flatten a 20 metre fire zone. But I'll have to let the marines know what is going on first."

—

She watched as Linda's beam shone down on a small area near a banshee awaiting its pilot, and made the necessary calculations and informed the necessary people. "_ O.k., we're on a 60 second count, there are 3 squadrons of Longswords in a holding pattern 5 miles out, they will begin strafing runs 30 seconds after the artillery stops. The ground assault will begin shortly after that."_

"Roger that" Linda and the Chief said in unison, and Cortana closed the channel. A few seconds after that several thousand Covenant troops looked up to the heavens as waves of what sounded like thunder came rolling over hills, as the first salvo of the High Altitude Artillery rained down on a small section of the group that contained the most high ranking Elites, vaporising everything in a roughly 20 by 20 metre area and killing about a hundred more from shrapnel.

The Covenant troops, now leaderless began to scatter to avoid more raining death but to no avail. Spread effect artillery hammered into the banshees on the ground instantly ending any chance for them to repel attacks from the Longswords now en route to the battle. As the last salvo hit a large group of Grunts, decimating them, the first squadron of Longswords flew over the Master Chief and started carving lines out of the Covenant ranks as complete and utter carnage erupted, Linda was firing so fast against Elites and brutes that the

Chief swore her Rifle was automatic. Meanwhile the second and third Longsword squadrons began their long and arduous task of bombing the remaining Covenant back to whatever their equivalent of the Stone Age was.

The Chief span around as a burly looking captain ran up to him. "Chief, we're all ready here, we'll start the assault on your command."

" Begin in thirty seconds." He responded, and quickly saluted him. The captain turned to his radioman and started barking orders into the headset. The Chief opened a channel to Linda, who didn't respond until she started reloading, which for a Spartan took less than a second. "Waddaya want?" she said slightly angrily, the Chief had noticed occasionally that when she was trying to concentrate on something, especially when it was killing Covenant at a rate of about 80 a minute, she could get a little cranky if you interrupted her. "Nothing special I just thought you might like to know that they're heading this way."

Linda, who had been using the 20x zoom, had not noticed the movements of the masses on the whole but as she zoomed out it was all too obvious that they were heading towards the hill that she and the Chief were on. "Shit!" the Chief was so surprised he almost dropped his rifle, in all his time as a SPARTAN, he had only heard Linda swear one other time, of course the first time the profanity had been followed by the words 'not again', and that was just after a full clip from a grunts needler had made lasagne out of her torso, which forced Will and the Chief to blow the Covenant ship without gathering the needed intel while dragging Linda's almost lifeless body, much to her anger when she was revived after 3 weeks of reconstructive surgery and recovery, so much so that she jumped from the bed and without the aid of her armour, threw both Will and the Chief through a wall for not leaving her for dead and getting the intel, even though she knew that they would not leave her or any other SPARTAN behind even if given a direct order from God.

" Any suggestions?"

" Yes, you relocate to the hill 2 miles southwest of here, we'll do the rest."

" Yes Chief" she picked her spare ammo and sprinted down the hill to circle the Covenant position. "Cortana, call the battalion opposite us and have them open fire, wait thirty seconds and then have all battalions fire at will."

" _I hope this works."_

" Hey, have I ever unintentionally failed a mission?"

End
file.